

therapeutic agent by a through bond elimination and the residue of the bio-reductive moiety to undergo an intramolecular cyclization reaction in which the nitrogen of the original nitro group provides an atom of the thus formed ring.

25. A conjugate as claimed in claim 24 wherein the bio-reductive moiety is non-cytotoxic.

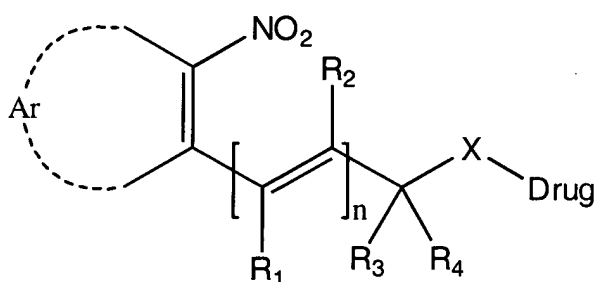
26. A conjugate as claimed in claim 24 wherein the formation of the ring occurs as a result of a self-alkylation reaction.

27. A conjugate as claimed in claim 24 wherein the residue of the therapeutic agent to be released on bio-reduction is bonded to the aromatic ring via a side chain attached to an atom of the aromatic ring adjacent to that to which the nitro group is bonded.

28. A conjugate as claimed in claim 24 wherein the drug moiety to be released on bio-reduction is bonded to the aromatic via a side chain incorporating one or more double bonds which are located in the side chain between said moiety and the aromatic ring, which is/are conjugated to the aromatic ring, and which is/are displaceable to provide for elimination of moiety

and formation of an arrangement of double bonds such that the residue of the bio-reductive moiety is capable of undergoing the intramolecular cyclisation reaction.

29. A conjugate as claimed in claim 28 which is of the general formula (I)



in which

the dashed lines represent completion of a substituted or unsubstituted aromatic ring system;

Drug is a therapeutic agent;

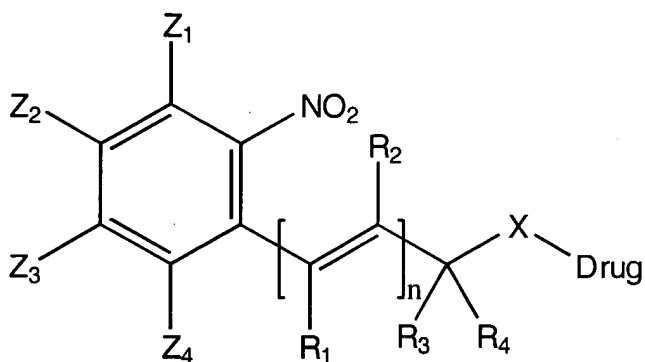
X is a linker (which may be part of the drug) and may for example be O, -NH, S, an amide, alcohol, phenol, carboxylic acid (carboxylate), carbonate, phosphate, sulphate or sulphonate;

R₁, R₂, R₃ and R₄ are independently hydrogen, substituted or unsubstituted alkyl (e.g. C₁₋₄), aryl, halide, amine, alkoxy, ether, ester, alcohol, phenol, nitro, amide, thiol, sulphate, phosphate, phosphonate; and

n is 1 to 3.

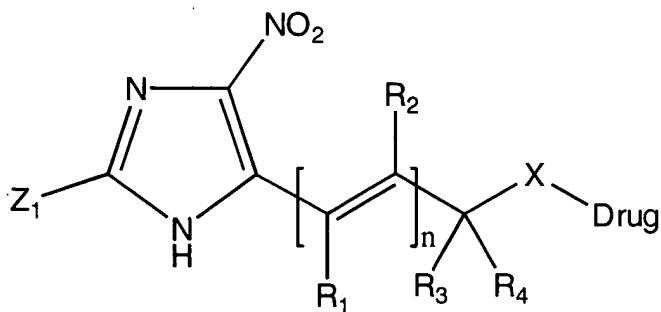
30. A conjugate as claimed in claim 29 which is of the general formula (II)

(II)



31. A conjugate as claimed in claim 29 which is of the general formula (III)

(III)

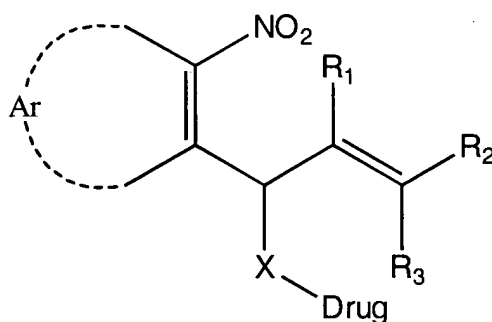


32. A conjugate as claimed in claim 29 wherein n=1.

33. A conjugate as claimed in claim 24 wherein the drug moiety to be released on bio-reduction is bonded to the carbon atom adjacent to the aromatic ring of a side chain bonded to that ring and that carbon atom is bonded to an olefinic double bond of the side chain.

B
A
34. A conjugate as claimed in claim 33 which is of the formula (IV)

(IV)



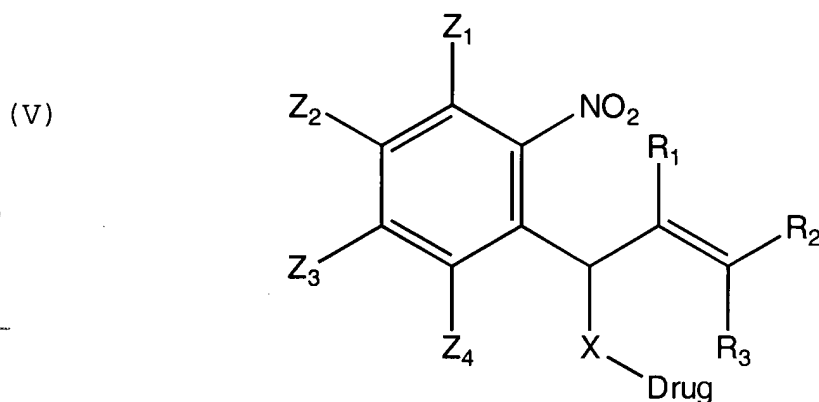
in which

Drug and X are as defined above;

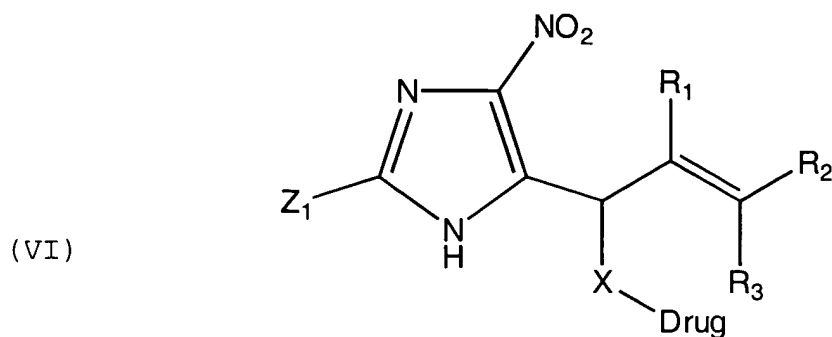
the dashed lines represent completion of a substituted or unsubstituted aromatic ring; and

R_1 , R_2 and R_3 are independently hydrogen, substituted or unsubstituted alkyl (e.g. C_{1-4}), aryl, halide, amine, alkoxy, ether, ester, alcohol, phenol, nitro, amide, thiol, sulphate, phosphate, phosphonate.

35. A conjugate as claimed in claim 34 which is of the formula (V)



36. A conjugate as claimed in claim 34 which is of the formula (VI)



37. A conjugate as claimed in claim 24 wherein the therapeutic agent is an anti-infective, such as an antibiotic or antiviral agents, analgesic, anaesthetic, anti-inflammatory or anti-neoplastic agent.

38. A therapeutic composition comprising a bio-reductive conjugate as claimed in claim 24 in conjunction with a therapeutically acceptable carrier.

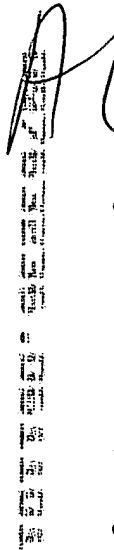
39. A method of therapeutic treatment comprising administering to a subject in need of such treatment a therapeutically effective amount of a bio-reductive conjugate as claimed in claim 24.

40. The method as claimed in claim 39 wherein the therapeutic treatment is for the treatment of a condition associated with hypoxia and/or ischemia.

41. The method as claimed in claim 39 wherein the therapeutic treatment is for the treatment of an inflammatory condition, diabetes, atherosclerosis, stroke, sepsis,

Alzheimer's disease and other neurological diseases, cancer, kidney disease, digestive diseases, liver disease, chronic periodontitis and ischemia following tissue transplantation.

42. The method as claimed in the claim 41 when the therapeutic treatment is for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis or other arthritic condition such as oesteoarthritis.

 43. The method as claimed in claim 41 wherein the therapeutic treatment is for the treatment of an inflammatory condition of soft tissue.

44. The method as claimed in claim 42 wherein the therapeutic treatment is for the treatment of a gastrointestinal disorder, for example, Crohn's disease.

45. The method as claimed in claim 43 wherein the therapeutic treatment is for use in the healing of wounds (acute and chronic), and the treatment of fibrotic disorders, ulceractive colitis, inflammatory bowel disease, epilepsy, cardiovascular reperfusion injury, cerebral reperfusion injury, hypertensions, cystic fibrosis, psoriasis, para-psoriasis,